

Vermillion County Board of Commissioners

Meeting Minutes

Date: August 3, 2026

Commissioner's Courtroom, 2nd Floor, Courthouse

- I. Call to order
- II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Commissioner Dunavan addressed the unusually large public attendance and explained that the meeting room was limited to approximately 60 occupants due to fire code restrictions. It was noted that commissioners had discussed relocating the meeting to a larger venue; however, adequate livestreaming equipment was not available in an alternate location. The Chair stated that future meetings with anticipated large attendance would be scheduled in a larger venue to better accommodate the public.

- III. Roll Call- All present
- IV. Approval of Minutes from June 15, 2026

Peebles Motion

Hess Second

- V. Approval of Claims from July 10, 17, 24, and 31, 2026.
Hess Motion

Peebles Second

All in Favor, Motion carried.

- VI. Approval of Payroll Claims from July 17 and 31, 2026.
Hess Motion

Peebles Seconds

All in Favor, Motion carried.

- VII. Public Comment:

Technical Difficulties

As the Board prepared to open the public comment portion of the meeting, the courthouse audio system experienced a complete failure. Multiple attempts were made to restore microphones and ceiling speakers, including consultation with technical support.

Because the audio failure prevented individuals in the hallway and viewers watching remotely from hearing speakers, the Board determined that public comment could not be conducted in a fair and accessible manner. After discussion, the Board announced:

- Public comment would be suspended for this meeting only due to the technical failure.
- Numerous agenda items would be postponed.
- A special meeting would be scheduled at a larger venue once arrangements could be confirmed.
- The postponed meeting would be publicly noticed through the Commissioners' Facebook page and local media.

c. Seth Rrecknor – Change in Zoning

Seth Rrecknor request to rezone approximately 3.5 acres from R-2 Residential to Rural Residential (RR) to allow pursuit of a special exception for a temporary RV park intended to provide housing for workers associated with the Duke Energy project.

Recknor stated:

- The property had been cleaned and cleared.
- The proposed development would provide temporary worker housing.
- He was willing to install fencing and security cameras.
- He intended to comply with county requirements.

Planning staff advised:

- The Area Plan forwarded the request without recommendation due to public opposition.
- Approval of the rezoning would not authorize operation of an RV park.
- A separate Board of Zoning Appeals special exception would still be required.
- County ordinance limits temporary RV developments to nine units and imposes additional site requirements.

Public Comments

Several neighboring property owners spoke in opposition.

Concerns raised included:

- Increased traffic.
- Noise.
- Compatibility with the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- Property maintenance.
- Property values.
- Safety.
- Water availability.
- Adequacy of access for RVs.
- General opposition from nearby residents.

Commissioners discussed existing county ordinances regarding noise, trash collection, annual permit renewal, and enforcement procedures. Additional discussion addressed fencing, vehicle circulation, site maintenance, and possible conditions.

Following discussion, the Board approved the rezoning request with the following conditions:

- Maximum of five campers;
- Eight-foot privacy fence along the south and east sides of the developed area;
- Security cameras installed on the property.

The applicant was reminded that Board of Zoning Appeals approval would still be required before any temporary housing could operate.

All in Favor, Motion Carried

d. Jason McLain- Change in Zoning

The Board considered a request presented by Russell McLain regarding property owned by Jason McLain.

The proposal sought rezoning to permit construction of approximately three temporary tiny homes for worker housing.

Penney Carpenter, Executive Director of Area Plan:

- The applicant resides adjacent to the proposed development.
- Septic requirements were being coordinated with the State Health Department.
- A Board of Zoning Appeals special exception would still be required.

AYE:

RJ Dun

RJ Dunavan

Misty Hess

Misty Hess

William Peebles

William Peebles

ATTEST:

Ron Dunavan 8/25/2026

Ron Dunavan, Auditor

NYE:

Vermillion County Government 255 S. Main St. Newport, IN 47966

VERMILLION COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

MEETING MINUTES

August 25, 2026 / 6:00 PM / Auditorium



Live Stream @vermillioncountyindiana

<https://www.youtube.com/live/JA5G6JxZ70k?si=gxssdyf7siarD03K>

Commissioner President RJ Dunavan called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance led by RJ Dunavan.

Roll Call. Present; President RJ Dunavan, Vice-President Misty Hess, Commissioner William Peebles, Attorney Jon Spurr, Auditor Ron Dunavan and Meeting Secretary Amy Tolbert.

Approval of the Minutes from August 3, 2026. Peebles motioned to approve, seconded by Hess. Motion carried.

Public Comment:

Approximately 35 people from the audience spoke in opposition of the Data Center Resolution 2026-10 and Ordinance 2026-17. They also spoke about their issues with the Vermillion Rise Board and asked the Commissioners to replace the current Rise Board Members. The Commissioners were in agreement that they had no intention of passing the ordinance as presented and refer to it as a “starting point”.

Open Issues

1. Union Hospital Lease-RJ Dunavan stated that he is still waiting on an update from the hospital. Tabled.
2. Rick Anderson, Veragy. Tabled due to a conflict.

New Business

1. Nolan Mihail-Data Center. Discussion about the Rise Board telling the community that there was no data center proposal and nothing to discuss. Mihail said that early this morning they were made aware of a formal agreement between IEDC and Terra Industry LLC from January 1, 2026, which awarded a State Sales Tax Exemption for a qualified data center located at 400 W Broadway in Hillsdale, which is within the Rise.They were aware. This is for a data center campus with a planned investment of 25 to 42 million dollars. There are exemptions on equipment and electricity. The rise has told the community repeatedly that Terra

Industry LLC was a porta potty and 2 trailers filled with

crypto-servers. The document circulating is a formal State incentive for a data center. A data center project at the Rise was far enough along in January 2026 to receive a formal State incentive for a data center.

Mihail stated that he is asking for 3 things; For the Commissioners to reject the proposed ordinance, for the members of the Rise Board to resign, and for the Commissioners to adopt a temporary moratorium.

2. Ordinance 2026-14 Closing a portion of South Main (Newport) during the Hillclimb. Spurr explained that safety issues are what resulted in this ordinance. The Town of Newport passed an ordinance stating that the roadway is going to be closed to traffic and that they will allow 5-10 minutes at the top of each hour for residents to get in or out of their property. Not all of South Main is in the Town of Newport. This ordinance is essentially the same as the Town's but addresses the portion of the road that is outside the Town limits out to old State Road 63. First reading was read into the record by RJ Dunavan. Hess made a motion to approve Ordinance 2026-14, seconded by Peebles. Motion carried.

3. Purdue Extension Vermillion County job description changes. Lori Bouslog, County Director stated she would like to change Office Manager to Administrative Assistant and Program Assistant/Secretary to Program Assistant. She stated that these changes accurately reflect the job duties and that her supervisor and the administration with Purdue Extension supports the changes. Peebles made a motion to allow, seconded by Hess. Motion carried.

4. Auditor's Office job description changes. Auditor Dunavan would like to change First Deputy to Office Administrator. The Meeting/Recording Secretary will stay the same. Payroll Deputy is changed to Payroll. The Human Resource Manager stays the same. Claims Deputy is changed to Claims Manager. Property Deputy is changed to Property Manager. It better defines the roles. Hess made a motion to allow, seconded by Peebles. Motion carried.

5. 4-H project request. Jamin Medina was to speak on this but unable to attend. RJ Dunavan read parts of the MOU and explained that it was between the Vermillion County Sheriff's Department and the Vermillion County 4-H Shooting Sports Science & Conservation Center located at 395 E 775 S Hillsdale, Indiana. This would allow controlled use of the property for official law enforcement training. In exchange, the Vermillion County Sheriff's Department agrees to provide significant facility improvements to benefit the 4-H program and community. They will also provide their certificate of liability insurance. They would also like input from the Highway Department in constructing a road. Peebles made a motion to allow, seconded by Hess. Motion carried. Hess clarified that use of the Highway Department would not produce overtime, that it would be during working hours and RJ Dunavan said yes. The Commissioners are not authorizing overtime for this project.

6. County Ordinance 2026-18 Reducing the speed limit on County Road 800 S. This was presented by several landowners that live on this road. Currently the speed limit is unmarked and they asked that it be reduced to 30 mph. RJ Dunavan read the entire Ordinance into the record. There

was no opposition from other landowners. Peebles made a motion to approve, seconded by Hess. Motion carried.

7. Budget Consulting Agreement. An agreement between the County and Council Attorney Scott Craig with Cox Law to consult with the County budget process and paperwork at a cost of \$13,500. Hess made a motion to approve, seconded by Peebles. Motion carried.
8. Economic Development(Old Building) Office-Outstanding bills. The office is currently unoccupied. RJ Dunavan said that invoices for cleaning and internet have been submitted and paid and they should not be. He added that the State Board of Accounts has an office in one of the other buildings but the County supplies their internet. The cleaning bill is \$150.00 per month and the Internet through Joink is \$238.74 per month. He stated that if these two items were terminated, it would not affect Purdue/4-H and they could relocate the State Board of Accounts. Bouslog stated they would have to find a different way to pay for cleaning. She also explained that Purdue supplies and pays for the internet so that would not be an issue. She also stated that she would have to shuffle some money around to pay for cleaning, potentially. Peebles made a motion to cut the internet at Economic Development and leave the cleaning service intact. Hess seconded the motion. RJ Dunavan added that there is not a contract with the current cleaning person and he would like that person to send a contract to the Board of Commissioners for review. Motion carried.
9. Economic Development Small Business Loan status and overpayment. RJ Dunavan explained several years ago Economic Development had a Commission and a Director and they started a small business loan program. A majority of the people are paying the outstanding loans and those that have not been paying have re-started. He said one individual has overpaid and needs the Commissioners authorization to issue a refund. Peebles made a motion to issue a refund along with a thank you letter. Hess seconded the motion. Motion carried.
10. Vermillion Rise Board Appointments. RJ Dunavan stated that there were two vacancies on the board. The most recent is Willie Wyres, who tendered his resignation last week. 17 applicants have applied and an executive session will need to be held to review and interview applicants so they can announce them at their next meeting. The executive session will be held on September 15, 2026 at 5:15 p.m.
11. Proposed Data Center Resolution 2026-10 and Ordinance 2026-17 as presented by the Vermillion Rise Board. RJ Dunavan stated that he was upset that the Rise Board sent the document to them on the Wednesday before their Monday meeting. No one from the Rise Board called or sent an email and no one attended the meeting. He said that, as of today, he still has not heard from any of them. He said he does not think they should consider or approve this resolution and ordinance, He then introduced to the public and conducted the first reading of the county ordinance 2026-18 which is an ordinance establishing a temporary development moratorium on data centers within the unincorporated areas of Vermillion County, Indiana and the Vermillion Rise Mega Park. Peebles asked what the options were with the Rise Resolution. Spurr stated the Rise Resolution that was put on the agenda, but he doesn't know by who,

is an invitation to initiate something to the Area Plan Commission. If you vote to do that, you will be initiating this proposal, which would then go to the Area Plan Commission. Brad Johnson, Ground Rules Inc, a consultant for the Area Plan Commission spoke about the "shot clock" that would begin which includes a public hearing within 60 days and then another 60 days to draft the resolution and have it back to you, which is certainly not enough time. His advice is to not make a formal recommendation. He said if the commissioners are going to refer it to the Area Plan Commission, outside of a moratorium, to please guide them to draft those regulations in whatever time it takes us to do that. He also stated that he was made aware of case law that states moratoriums must start with the Area Plan Commission. The Area Plan Commission would hold a public hearing on it and then present it to the Commissioners. This will make it a legally enforceable ordinance. RJ Dunavan asked that if the Commissioners sent the Resolution that was drafted for them without their knowledge to the Area Plan Commission, could the Commissioners send it back for changes a second time and Johnson said no, it is no longer allowed to bounce it back and forth. RJ Dunavan said that this needs to be done sooner rather than later before the State comes in and takes local control. Johnson said he would like the committee to consist of a member from the Board of Commissioners and a member from the public. The committee will consist of 3 members of the Area Plan Commission, One Commissioner, One Council member, One Rise Board member and one member from the public. Spurr explained that the Commissioners are just making a general statement asking the Area Plan Commission to start looking into it, they are not following a process to initiate a proposal, so there is no "shot clock" at this time. Peebles explained that a moratorium could not be voted on tonight because it must be initiated by the Area Plan Commission. RJ Dunavan explained that for it to be enforceable, the Area Plan Commission must initiate it and that what they are doing is giving guidance to the consultant. Johnson suggests they vote to dismiss the Rise Draft Resolution and Draft Ordinance and to instruct the Area Plan Commission to start working on the draft for the regulation of data centers. Peebles made a motion that they dismiss the Rise Board's proposed Ordinance 2026-17 and proposed Resolution 2026-10. RJ Dunavan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

12. Data Center Ordinance. RJ Dunavan proposed they instruct the Area Plan Commission to start working on a data center ordinance and asked if all Commissioners were in agreement, they were. It was then decided that the committee would consist of three Area Plan Commission Members, one Commissioner and it was agreed that Peebles would be their representative, one Council Member, one Rise Board Member and one member from the public and it was agreed that Nolan Mihail would be the public representative. All Commissioners were in agreement.

13. Closing Comments:

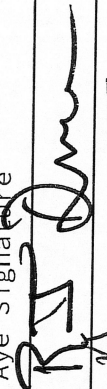
- a. A member from the audience asked if the Rise Board could function with only 3 and RJ Dunavan said they could because it is a quorum. He also stressed the need to move quickly on the reappointments to that board.

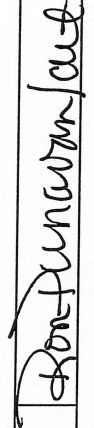
- b. Hess asked for clarification of the data center committee, specifically pointing out again that there were currently only 3 Rise Board members. RJ Dunavan said that the Area Plan will need time and that they need to get the Rise Board appointed soon.
- c. It was explained that Adam Winland, JP Rahm and Joe Ellis are the three current Rise Board members. A member from the audience asked that Joe Ellis not be a part of the data center committee and Hess said she did not think they could do that. RJ Dunavan stated that they would be looking into the comments made earlier and encouraged the public to report any board member or any board members posts that are unbecoming to the Board of Commissioners.
- d. It was suggested from the public that the Commissioners tour and existing data center. RJ Dunvan said they have talked about that but it has been difficult to plan. He suggested that maybe the committee would be interested in doing this.
- e. RJ Dunavan publicly thanked Terry Carrera, the courthouse staff and the Auditor's office for their excellent job in preparing the space for the meeting.
- f. RJ Dunavan corrected a statement he made earlier about the railroad at the Rise. He said the Army removed in 2011 or 2012 prior to the creation of the Rise Board.
- g. RJ Dunavan also wanted to clarify that RJL Solutions does not represent Vantage and that if anyone has information that says otherwise to please let them and RJL solutions know. He stated RJL represents them in Economic Development and that they have been working tirelessly with local businesses and projects, specifically the Duke Energy Project. He said RJL would be at a future meeting to provide an update,

Adjournment

Peebles made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 p.m. Hess seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Read in Full and approved by the Vermillion County Commissioners this 1st day of September, 2026.

Name	Aye Signature	Nay Signature
President RJ Dunavan		
VP Misty Hess		
William Peebles		

Attestation:		Auditor Ron Dunavan
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